ion; conversation never stopped between Katie and her mother.

There were Vinzie and Josie—how they worked! and their mother also, yet sat together sewing and chatting, not at all depressed because they had to work so hard, but seeming to enjoy life. "Vinzie is pale; she ought to get out and play." "I help my mother, so we pay for farm, and we all go back to Italy. I like to work with my mother."

Then there was Virginia—a joyous, dancing elf, the pride and joy of her father and mother. "I'm tired playing; I hate the street." To sit beside her mother and work was a pleasure; it was being a partner, contributing to the family life.

Every boy in one of the recreation centers in a very large public school supported himself, wholly or in part. But earning money was as natural to those boys as "doing chores" is to the boy who lives on the farm, and done in the same spirit; by some willingly, by some reluctantly.

There are the boys and girls who carry the finished work to the shops and return with the unfinished to their homes, hurrying each way lest they be late for school. There are those who lag and linger so that they will be late, and so escape school for at least half a day. There are the boys and girls who will work gladly at any work to escape going to school, and these are usually in the homes where dirt, shiftlessness or love of money controls.—The Churchman.

Belated contributions to increase the sunshine gift for November to the Children's Home Society of Florida, will still be gladly received.

MRS. BRADT.

Effect of Climate on Plants.

Under the title "Does Climate Affect Earliness?" a writer in the Fruit Grower has this to say:

"I have always heard it said that seed of any vegetable grown in the South would be later in ripening than seed of the same variety grown North, but I am beginning to rather doubt it. The two earliest watermelons are the Cole's early and Phinney's early. This year in my trial grounds I have seed of both from South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa and Oklahoma. On the theory given above one would naturally expect them to ripen in that order, but the fact is that the first melons to ripen and the best ones are on the row from the Oklahoma seed. Last year the results were the same."

My experience has been with trees, and with these there is no manner of doubt that Southern trees ripen later than those of the same kind grown North. Not only do trees brought directly from the South do this, but seeds of Southern trees sown North and producing seedlings find the seedlings of the same character as the trees themselves. Seeds of Southern trees sown side by side with seeds of the same species from Northern trees, give seedlings which are of great interest to watch. The Northern ones will have finished their growth and ripened their wood long before the others, in fact, those rejresenting the Far South will be found with unripened wood when frosts come, and for this reason are often winter-killed, while exactly the same kind, but from Northern seed, alongside them will prove quite hardy. It takes some years for a plant to take on characters such as climates demand, and in the case of the watermelons or of anything else, a change of character would hardly be looked for under several years. Growing them one or two years in the same place, say Oklahoma, would not bring about a change. In the case of the seedlings referred to, it takes several years before they behave as Northern grown ones do, but in time they do. Were the melons grown for a number of years in a Far Northern state, early ripening might be looked for.

HIS HEART'S BROTHER.

By C. A. Stephens.

On May 26th, a few hours before the battle of Nanshan, Capt. Oka of the Ninth Tokyo Regiment was sent forward with a flag of truce on a mission pertaining to the Red Cross service and its stretcher-bearers. He was a young man, barely twenty, of the Samurai class, well educated, speaking both French and English.

From the Russian redoubts there came down to meet the white flag a lieutenant, Alexander Vannoffsky, of the Archangel Artillery. He, too, was a young man, and he spoke French, as do nearly all the Russian officers. Vannoffsky saluted stiffly, and asked the object of the flag.

The question raised was one which the Russian lieutenant felt obliged to refer to his superior officer. The sergeant accompanying him was therefore sent back with a written note for instructions, and a delay of some minutes ensued.

To pass the time while they stood there waiting, Capt. Oka began conversation with his youthful opponent, very formally at first, then more cordially. They talked of London, Paris and New York, which places both had visited.

In the fifteen or twenty minutes of waiting each had taken a liking to the other. And when at last they saluted to separate and go back, there was a still further exchange of courtesies, and the young Japanese officer placed his hand on his breast and said, "You are my heart's brother for the future."

Twice afterward, as the great siege went on and opportunity offered, Capt. Oka sent his good wishes to Lieut. Vannoffsky, with the expressed hope that no harm had come to his "heart's brother." And in August, just after the great assault when twenty-five thousand Japanese fell, the Russian was able to transmit a penciled note of greeting to this young friend of an alien race, with warmest remembrances, and signed, "Thy Alexandrovitch.

Amid the fearful vicissitudes of those weary days there seemed little likelihood that they would meet again. Yet meet they did six weeks later—but under what terrible circumstances and after what horrors!

It was at the "Wedge of Death"—that blood-stained zigzag, which Gen. Nogi finally drove through the earth up to the very parapet of the lofty Russian fort, known as the "Eternal Dragon."

This was after "203 Meter Hill" had been taken by the Japanese, and their huge mortars had destroyed, by plunging fire, what was left of the Russian fleet in Port Arthur harbor. Yet still it was found impossible to take Port Arthur by assault. The line of lofty forts on the heights, surrounded by broad moats, often forty feet deep, proved inaccessible. Every approach was over a tangled thicket of barbed wire, into which currents of electricity could be turned from dynamos hidden in bomb proofs. Night attacks were of no avail, for searchlights played constantly, and star-bombs scattered blazing phosphorus over the glaces of the forts and for miles around.

After their frightful losses during the last week in August the Japanese were forced to adopt the slower, safer method of regular siege operations with trenches, zigzags and tunnels carried up beneath the walls of the forts, which were then blown up with dynamite. In this Herculean effort they excavated nineteen miles of trenches in the hard earth and rock, always at least six feet deep and eight feet wide, frequently deeper, and covered over with planks and earth.

It was one of these zigzags, now advanced up near the moat of the Eternal Dragon fort, which became known to the armies as the Wedge of Death.

More soldiers lost their lives here than would have filled the trench with their bodies and covered all the ground about it four deep. It was here that, after a savage sortie by the Russians, the Japanese used their own dead and wounded to form a final breastwork of defense.

The point of the Wedge of Death was within forty yards of the Russian parapet, and here assailants and defenders lay watching each other through chinks between sand-bags, waiting for a chance to shoot. A few inches at a time a low steel screen was pushed forward by the Japanese sappers, and while Russian bullets pattered furiously about it a little more earth was dug away, and thus the trench advanced.

The soldiers here were relieved every thirty minutes. Human nerves could not endure the strain longer.

The besiegers were more than fifty days pushing forward this trench, inch by inch; yet rarely, by night or day, did a minute pass without the crack of a rifle or the rat-a-tat of machine guns, accompanied by the whiz and patter of balls.

Yet up and down the shattered gray slopes of the hill and forts outside there was never a living thing in sight. Both armies were invisible, hidden in the earth, hidden yet watching with grim determination. If during the assaults and sorties a soldier fell in the open space between these grim lines there was no succor for him. Biscuits and water-bottles were often thrown to the sufferers, but not even the Red Cross men ventured forth to bring them in.

On one evening in September, after a fierce bombardment all day from the Japanese siege guns and mortars, Gen. Stossel ordered his own guns to cease firing, one by one, as if silenced.

Then as darkness drew on he instructed the engineers in charge of the five searchlights on the east side of the fortress to cut off the electric current suddenly from the first one, then another, as if the Japanese shells had injured the dynamos.

This ruse succeeded. Thinking the moment favorable, Gen. Oshimo ordered a night attack on the Eternal Dragon and Keekwan forts.

Three full regiments of Japanese infantry, one of them the Ninth, issuing silently from their trenches in the darkness, began to climb the steep mountain side.

When half-way up the Russian stratagem was disclosed. Suddenly the searchlights played again, betraying the assailants as they climbed Then the guns, supposed to be silenced, belched shell and shrapnel, and a regiment of Siberian sharpshooters that had already filed out from the moat of the fortress charged the flank of the Japanese.

Then ensued for two or three hours, in the alternate darkness and glare of the searchlights, amidst barbed-wire entanglements, one of those sanguinary hand-to-hand conflicts for which the siege of Port Arthur is without a parallel.

Neither side gained a definite advantage. The Russian survivors at last took refuge in their fort, the Japanese in their trenches, and in the dawn, down the slope, lay five thousand men, killed or so desperately wounded that they were unable to crawl away. Among the wounded, close up to the moat of the Eternal Dragon, was Capt. Oko, both legs broken by a fragment of shell. At about nine o'clock that morning Lieu. Vannoffsky was looking down through a loop-hole of the fort wall above. He saw Oka stir feebly; and after a second glance through a glass he recognized him.

Twice the Russian spoke Oka's name down from the wall, but could not make him hear.

During the afternoon Lieut. Vannoffsky descended to a caponiere in the moat and tossed a flask over to the wounded man. It fell wide or passed unnoticed; and it was not till nightfall that the Russian was really able to do anything.

Then after it had grown juite dark and the searchlights were playing elsewhere, the lieutenant climbed out of the moat and crawled cautiously to where Oka lay, partly sheltered in a hole made by an exploding shell.

It had been a day of frightful suffering for the young Japanese, but he was still alive and hearing Vannoffsky creeping near, he drew a pistol, thinking him one of the enemy come to rob or murder him. Vannoffsky laid a gentle hand on his arm, however.

"Fear not. It is thy Alexandrovitch," he whispered; then he grasped his hand, held a flask to his lips, and inquired as to his wounds.

The searchlight now came dancing over them, and not to draw bullets, either from the fort or the trenches, both lay still. When it had passed Vannoffsky continued his ministrations; and at last, finding Oka quite unable to move, he resolved on an act of heroism—one that might cost him not only his life, but honor as a soldier.

To carry Oka across the deep moat and up into the fort was impossible, but his strength was equal to conveying him down the slope to the Japanese trenches. And that was what he did, taking the little fellow on his back and crawling slowly on hands and knees down the slope, stopping always when the searchlight came that way.

Thus it happened that at about 2 o'clock that night a Japanese soldier on duty in the Wedge of Death heard a slight noise at hand, and cocking his rifle, challenged sharply.

"Hold!"

"It is a friend," was the Russian's immediate reply. And then on the very brink of the trench appeared Vannoffsky with Capt. Oka on his back.

The Japanese soldier pulled them both down into the zigzag, and Oka feebly explained the strange situation. For a time the Japanese officer in charge was in great doubt as to his duty, whether or not to hold the young Russian as a prisoner of war—since he had unavoidably seen their trench.

But after a little conversation more gallant setiments prevailed.

Vannoffsky was bidden to return, and he reached the Dragon fort in safety.

At the surrender of Port Arthur Lieut. Vannoffsky became a prisoner of war in earnest, but he was permitted to be the guest of his "heart's brother," then convalescing at his Japanese home.—Youth's Companion.
